RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

JULY, 1880.

A NOTEWORTHY GATHERING.

THE Thirty-sixth Anniversary of the Ragged School Union, held on the 10th May, was one of the best attended, and in some other respects equal in interest to those of its early days. The occasion was made specially notable by the presentation of a testimonial to Mr. Gent, the retiring Secretary, by Lord Shaftesbury, the President of the Society, at the instance of the Committee. A *facsimile*—to use Mr. Gent's words—of this "thing of beauty" is given, in the belief that it will be welcome to the subscribers, to whom his name must be as a household word; and to the numerous labourers in the field of what may truly be called Juvenile Home Missionary enterprise such a memento must meet with grateful acceptance.

The general design was conceived by an old ragged scholar. The inscription is on vellum. It has a beautifully illuminated border, is framed with gold, and covered with glass. The succinct account of service, drawn up by Mr. H. R. Williams, a member of the Committee, is literally truthful. The terms of affection in which it is rendered, at once fervent, graceful, and compact, reflect honour alike on the donors and the recipient. Lord Shaftesbury and Mr. Gent were equally happy in the performance of their respective tasks.

The noble lord spoke from the platform of friendship. A co-worker for thirty-six years, every word was weighty with knowledge and affectionate appreciation.

Mr. Gent, after extricating himself from the thraldom of feelings which threatened to overwhelm him, rose to the level of the occasion, and gave utterance to an intelligent expression of grateful emotion. "A touch of nature makes the whole world kin;" the spark flew, and the meeting responded with a sympathetic thrill of gladness.

The Report, read by the new Secretary, Mr. J. Kirk, referred to a considerable increase in the Society's operation, to an increase in the number of scholars—some 3,000—under religious instruction, to the large number of persons, juvenile and adult—about 50,000—under spiritual supervision, and to the intention of taking under the Society's wing institutions that give promise of retaining and keeping under influences for good young persons at an age when they are likely to lapse into evil.

The one discordant note of the meeting was struck when allusion was made to the state of the finances. The year began with a balance of £1,170, but when the year ended the balance, with the whole of the year's income, had well-nigh vanished.

This is a matter of serious import. Mr. Waddy, Q.C., whose speech (see report) will well repay perusal, dealt with this matter in a way which will commend itself to all thoughtful and philanthropic minds. He says that if things continue as they now are we shall go to the bad at the rate of £1,000 per annum.

The Committee aid the affiliated institutions liberally. They pay two-thirds of the Evening School teachers' salary, two-thirds of the payments made to doorkeepers in such neighbourhoods as absolutely require them, annual grants to Day Schools, and special grants to any of the institutions who are in a position of need, and whose existence is imperilled by financial difficulty.

A few selections from local reports given as fair specimens of the general work, amply show that the work is full of vitality and is bearing precious fruit.

Britannia Row.—"Forty-two of the old scholars received prizes at Exeter Hall on the 7th May for having kept their situations more than twelve months, giving satisfaction to their employers, and attending Sunday School regularly."

Dove Row.—"The Boys' Sunday Night School and the Girls' Sunday Night School still maintain their position, and evidently a great work is being done amongst the youth of the neighbourhood. Three of the scholars have openly acknowledged their love to Christ by joining the branch church."

London Street.—"Notwithstanding that the School Board is doing so much, there are still hundreds of poor boys who can neither read nor write, hence the need of good evening schools in poor neighbourhoods. We have good Night Schools, and on Saturday afternoons the lower schoolroom has been open for the poor boys of the neighbourhood to come and mend their shoes; all tools have been supplied, and in this way many have been preserved from wet and bare feet; matmaking has in some measure been

taught. During the winter some of the poorest of the elder boys have been invited to sit by a good fire whenever the room could be spared; as long as they have behaved well, they have been allowed a considerable latitude; some of the most uncontrollable have in this way been reached; three have joined the Senior Band of Hope and the Brass Band, others have joined the Savings Bank."

Exeter Buildings.—"The Old Scholars' Meeting was held, when 135 men and women sat down to tea. Some of the men spoke with earnestness to their fellows concerning the way of salvation, and expressed thankfulness for having been at the school."

Mansfield Street.—"The Committee express deep thankfulness to God for the continued prosperity of the Evening Ragged School. Mr. J. Johnson, who was mainly instrumental in starting the school twenty years ago, and was, forty years ago, a scholar in the infant class at Surrey Chapel School, still continues with us as secretary. He was encouraged a short time since by meeting a young man who introduced himself as a former scholar in the school, where he received his first impressions, and is now a minister of a chapel in the country. The attendance the first Sunday the school was opened was 76 children; now it is upwards of 720."

Park Crescent, Clapham.—"A letter was lately received from a young man (one of the old boys now resident in the upland bush in New Zealand), in which the writer makes special mention of the hours spent at 'Our Room;' another old friend, who has joined the army, wrote from Walmer shortly before going to a foreign station."

King Edward Street.—"There are now 517 children on the books. On inviting the parents to spend an evening with the teachers, it was found that 43 of the children were fatherless, 31 motherless, and 19 had neither father nor mother, but were living with friends. Thirty-six voluntary teachers, many of whom reside at a distance, cheerfully walk several miles on the Sabbath and other days in order to benefit the children under their care; some have done this for upwards of twenty years. The Week-night School is open for the benefit of lads and girls above the School Board age requiring educational assistance. There are 110 scholars on the books. The boys and girls in situations have been encouraged to sympathise with the sick and those who are less fortunate than themselves. Some five years ago an effort was made to benefit the parents by lending them week by week publications of an interesting and elevating character, consisting of the "Sunday at Home," "Leisure Hour," &c. These have been highly appreciated, and the demand for them has steadily increased; so much so, that upwards of 10,000 were lent during the past year."

Red Lion Street.—"Fully three fourths of those now engaged in carrying on these schools were originally scholars in the school. No less than 48 of the old scholars have taken prizes for good conduct and long service in their respective situations."

George Yard.—"The Free Ragged Day Schools. Nearly 300 children meet twice a day for instruction. This branch of work is found necessary for the class of children who attend, for the poverty and vice are as great as ever. At the present time there are many children who belong to no

school, and several whose parents are constantly moving from one part of the metropolis to another, or who are tramping it from town to town. The Free Ragged Schools is really a missionary work."

These sample extracts lend additional weight to the true and strong words uttered by Lord Shaftesbury at the meeting. He said that "for nearly forty years now we have carried on this system of inexpressible blessing among the poorest and most neglected class of children in this great capital; and the benefits that have arisen from it—socially, morally, politically, and financially—are such as have never arisen from any other system of tuition and elevation. I tell you that there are still thousands and tens of thousands of the most destitute and miserable portion of the human race who receive care and instruction for time and for eternity in Ragged Schools." If, then, you have the means of assisting in carrying on this work, will you refuse them? God forbid. We hope this appeal will meet with a generous response.

OUTLINE OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

The steady growth and wide-spreading fertility of Ragged Schools have become a matter of history, and the number of agencies and societies which have sprung directly from the movement, as slips from the parent tree, were fully sketched in the Report for last year. The Committee have a firm conviction that the sphere for Ragged School and Home Mission work, and the need for Bible teaching and evangelistic effort, are as wide and important as ever. They will still want, and in augmented numbers, the self-denying service of Christian men and women to seek, and if possible to save, that which otherwise would be lost. Nor can they afford to lose one subscriber, as the prayerful sympathy and active support of the Lord's people will be increasingly required in sustaining the varied operations of the Ragged Schools and Missions. To have maintained the efficiency and extent of the varied departments of Christian activity amid many contrary elements is really an advance, and when further it is shown that there is in some instances a large increase in numbers reported, it indicates for the movement a growth which is the sign of life, and the best augury for future development. The fact of an increase of 3,000 children in attendance at the Sunday School deserves special notice, besides advances in the numbers of other sections of the work.

The lettered ignorance which formerly prevailed is rapidly in course of removal, and the Christian teacher is free to instil the truths of God's Word. But there is yet much to be done. There are thousands of the ignorant yet to be taught, the ragged to be clothed, the vicious to be reclaimed, homes to be visited, hungry to be fed, sorrowful to be comforted, and the poor to whom the Gospel should be preached.

The Committee's aim will still be to bring destitute children, youth and upgrown, under moral and religious influences.

This has been the basis of the past, and as an earnest of what is possible now it may be mentioned that a Society which has associated with it 160 buildings within the metropolitan area, with an army of 2,926 voluntary workers, and exercising a benign influence over at least some 50,000 people, must be regarded as an important factor for good, and well worthy of the support of the Christian public.

The Committee have first to refer, and they do so with extreme regret, to the enforced retirement of their valued Secretary, Mr. Gent, after his worthily filling the post since the year 1845. The long and painful illness through which he passed eight years ago, had left its mark upon him, and from which he had never entirely recovered. For many months he had suffered so much pain and debility as frequently to be incapacitated from the active duties of the office. Considering that for thirty-one years Mr. Gent unweariedly served the Society as Secretary, and for five years previously as a voluntary worker, it was thought prudent by your Committee, both in the interests of the Society as well as in the interests of one who had served the cause of Ragged Schools with such marked ability and fidelity, to relieve him entirely from his arduous duties as Secretary of the Ragged School Union and the editorship of the *Quarterly Record*, and to give him a retiring allowance, to elect him a member of the Managing Committee, and also to create for him a new post—that of Consulting Secretary. The varied knowledge and experience of Mr. Gent will thus be available as occasion may require, and he will carry with him in his retirement the hearty sympathy and good wishes of all the friends of the Society, and the prayerful hope that he may long and peacefully enjoy his earthly rest, and hereafter receive the Master's welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Mr. John Kirk, who resigned his position as Secretary to the Open Air Mission, was unanimously appointed the Secretary as Mr. Gent's successor.

It was also resolved that Mr. R. J. Curtis, hitherto so well known as the School Agent, should in future be called the Organising Secretary, and that he should be entrusted with the editorship of the *Quarterly Record*.

The past year has formed no exception to the growth of good ideas, and the following "new and extended efforts" have been set on foot:—Sunday Schools, Morning and Afternoon, 2; Sunday Night School, 1; Sunday Children's Service, 1; Men's Classes, 2; Night Schools, 11; Youth's Institutes, 2; Industrial Classes, 2; Recreation Classes, 4; Band of Hope, 1; Sewing Classes, 2; Singing Classes, 2; Sunday Morning Breakfasts, 2; Children's Dinners, 2; Old Scholars' Meeting, 1; Fellowship of Animals' Friends, 3; Flower Girls' Mission, 1; Penny Banks, 3; Clothing Club, 1; Laundry, 1; Weekly Lectures, 3; Mission Services, 2; Week Night Children's Service, 1; Mothers' Meetings, 2; Drum and Fife Band, 1. Total, 53.

There are at present 51 Day Schools, with a total average attendance of 4,898. They are conducted in separate rooms, nine being for boys and nine for girls, and the remaining thirty-three for mixed and infants. Most of the Day Schools have been declared to be efficient by the Government inspectors, and are allowed to be included in the estimate of the educational accommodation of the district.

These schools are few compared with former times, but it is gratifying to know that they are of admitted value and usefulness. Speaking at the East Greenwich Ragged School meeting lately, a member of the London School Board said:—"One of the most difficult problems of the time was the one which such institutions as Ragged Schools had to grapple with—the education of the lowest class of the population. The London School Board was doubtless doing a vast and a useful work towards the amelioration of the young outcast poor of the metropolis, but there was one thing that Board could not pretend to supply—the heart and spirit of the Christian worker. If a man or a woman would only throw their whole energetic soul into a cause, depend upon it that cause would profit much more than it could by the agency of merely official organisation, and he was convinced that there was room for schools established for the purpose of raising these children in a social, a moral, and a religious point of view.

It is notorious that there are still many children roaming the streets, and eluding the vigilance of the School Board visitor. It is, however, only just to add that the number is sensibly diminishing, and that the poor children which the law is driving inside the Board Schools exhibit signs of progress in discipline, mental training, and Biblical knowledge, which augurs well for the future. But it will be some time yet before managers can close their Day Ragged Schools, and feel that in this direction their work is done.

The numbers as examined by Mr. Curtis are as follows:—In Reading, 1,713 passed; in Writing, 1,682 passed; in Arithmetic, 1,658 passed; in Scripture, 1,318 passed.

Sunday Schools.

A hundred years ago Robert Raikes, of honoured name and fame, began his labour for good amongst the rough boys and girls who crowded the streets of Gloucester. And it is worthy of note that these initial efforts in Sunday Schools were identical with the later Ragged Schools. They were both started for the special behoof of the ignorant and depraved waifs and strays of our streets.

With respect to the Sunday Ragged Schools, it is cheering to find the figures indicating an upward tendency, the aggregate showing an increase of nearly 3,000 over the figures of the previous year. There have been 33,563 children in attendance at the Sunday Schools.

The Sunday Morning Schools number 62. The Afternoon Schools number 108, and the Evening Schools 82.

The Committee feel it to be meet and right and their bounden duty to do all that in them lies to help forward Night Schools for the benefit of rough youths of both sexes. It needs but a slight acquaintance with this class to know that the young toilers of London, from the age of fourteen to eighteen, have profited little by the new order of things educationally. These young people now stand in need of a friendly hand to sympathise and help them, and the Committee have spared neither funds nor trouble to effect this. It is not too much to say that the great bulk of the Night Schools have been kept open in consequence of the liberal aid rendered by this Society, and the Committee are satisfied that the money has been wisely bestowed.

There are at present 80 Night Schools steadily at work for Boys, with an average attendance of 2,616; the Girls number 1,581 in 54 Schools, and 26 Night Schools have a mixed attendance of boys and girls amounting to 1,138. The whole gives a total average attendance of 5,335, with a gross total of 9,161 names recorded on the books.

Associated with the foregoing is the somewhat novel movement for providing some counter-attraction to the low theatre and music hall, under the comprehensive term of *Youths' Institutes* or Recreation Classes.

Six years ago such institutes were commenced with two of our institutions in Castle Street, Long Acre, and in Old Pye Street, Westminster, mainly with a view to retain the big lads who were getting the impression that they were too old for the Night School.

Similar agencies have been attempted in Brewer's Court, Castle Street, Clapham, Clare Market, Ernest Street, Exeter Buildings, Gloucester Square; John Street, Homerton; The King Edward School; Love Lane; Nelson Street; North Hill, Highgate; Ogle Mews, Old Pye Street, St. Peter Street, Wagner Street, Whitecross Street, and elsewhere.

The Committee have resolved, so far as the Ragged Schools were concerned, to embrace all such agencies in the already manifold network of Ragged School organisation.

There have been 91 Children's Religious Services conducted during the year, with an average attendance of 8,635, as against 72 recorded in the last Report, with 5,886 in attendance.

Prayer Meetings.

The returns show that these holy seasons of encouragement and blessing are regularly appointed in 85 schools, with an average attendance last year of 3,709.

The Bible Classes

have been called the seed plots for teachers. These have been conducted in 60 schools, with an attendance of elder scholars of 1,671.

The Committee have continued the sale of the Tenpenny Pocket Bible to the school at the rate of sixpence per copy, as notified in the past, and 662 have been sold during the year, bringing the grand total up to 42,930.

The Ragged Church or Mission Service,

where the poor can attend without let or hindrance from shabby garb or officious attendant, and where they can ensure a hearty welcome and a cheerful service adapted to their capacity and need, have been conducted in 80 schools, with an aggregate attendance of 9,220.

Parents' Meetings

have been held in 87 schools, and have been attended by 3,611 persons.

Men's Clubs

are intended to provide a comfortable place of resort for working men after the day's labour is over.

There are 21 Clubs held in the schools, with a total membership of 1,844.

Bands of Hope

are established in 87 schools, with a roll of membership numbering 8,157.

These numbers show an increase over the previous year of 24 Bands and 1,947 members.

Lending Libraries

are attached to 90 affiliated institutions, possessing 24,497 volumes for lending to the children and their parents.

By the generous kindness of the Religious Tract Society, and a payment from their own funds, the Committee are enabled to offer a

grant of £4 worth of library books to each of the schools for the nominal sum of 15s. The Committee would gratefully record their sense of indebtedness to the Religious Tract Society for their generosity, and for their further kindness in making free grants of picture cards, which have been greatly appreciated by the scholars.

Scholars' Prizes.

The number of applications received for prizes to be awarded to the young people who have passed through our schools, and who have remained in a situation for twelve months with a good character, is about the same as last year; 601 papers were received, and after a careful scrutiny it was found that 564 were eligible for the prizes, being exactly the same number as that of the previous year. The money prize of 7s. 6d. is given for the first time, and 310 are eligible for this. Those coming for the second or more times will receive a handsome copy of "Around and About Old England," by Clara L. Mateaux.

An illuminated card, the production again of Mr. Montague, is given to each of the prize-winners.

Penny Banks.

Eighty-four have been open during the year. 23,763 persons have deposited a total sum of £11,570 11s. 4d., with a remaining balance in hand of £2,597 18s. 7d.

The Clothing Club

exists in fifty-three schools, and which has dealt during the year with a gross sum of £1,557 15s. 11d. This total represents the hard-earned pence of the poor for purposes of clothing.

Boot and Shoe Clubs

are at work in the schools, and these often prove a source of help and comfort to those who are struggling to make both ends meet.

Dinners.

Dinners to the children and to the parents at fixed times have become quite an institution in many of the schools, and experience goes to prove that good has attended the effort.

The Destitute Children's Dinner Society has contributed to supply some of the dinners, and the aid thus afforded is thankfully acknowledged.

The Committee would make especial mention of the "Robin Dinners," instituted by the Rev. Charles Bullock, and sustained by the readers of *Hand and Heart*.

INFANT NURSERIES OR CRÈCHES

exist at George Yard, Hornsey Road, Chequer Alley, Ogle Mews, and Whitecross Street, and are attended with beneficial results.

SHOEBLACKS.

The returns of these industrious toilers are in keeping with the past. There has been an increase in the amount earned at the end of each year, and the present forms no exception: 344 boys have earned £12,899 9s. 2d., or an increase of £233 5s. 7d. over the previous year.

The boys have deposited in the bank the sum of £695 16s. 7d.

There are various Minor Efforts, *e.g.*—10 Nurseries for Sick Children, with Resident Nurse, 7 Sick Funds, 1 Medical Mission, 5 Crèches, 1 Provident Club, 3 Relief Societies, 1 Guild of Holy Life, 1 Maternity Society, 7 Invalids' Dinners, and situations have been found for 1,239 during the year.

Above all this, there is a vast amount of unobtrusive good done in the schools which cannot be tabulated or reduced to figures.

TEACHERS.

The Committee cordially acknowledge the valuable co-operation of 2,920 fellow-labourers, who toil on with unwearying fidelity and self-denial known only to the few, and to Him who seeth in secret. 256 of these teachers were formerly scholars.

There have been, in addition, 199 paid teachers engaged during the year, supplemented by the assistance of 126 monitors and a number of doorkeepers.

Mr. Curtis, the Organising Secretary, will continue to serve as a friendly link between the schools and the Union. For more than twenty years he has been wont to act as the experienced visitor and adviser, and the Committee are assured that his counsel and assistance have been of service to the cause generally.

During the year more than a thousand visits were paid by him to the various Sunday and Week Day operations.

THE QUARTERLY RECORD

has been sustained for another year, and, it is believed, with benefit to the schools and to the whole movement.

EXCURSIONS.

The Ragged School teachers were privileged to spend a happy day (July 19, 1879) together in Cassiobury Park, Watford, the seat of the Earl of Essex, permission having been kindly granted by his lordship; and 1,300 children and 90 teachers, in 40 vans, from fourteen schools in all parts of London, from Stratford in far east to Marylebone in the

west, were taken to the Petersham portion of Richmond Park, where provisons, toys, &c., were freely supplied to them.

The cost was defrayed from a fund supplied in response to an appeal from Earl Shaftesbury.

The Rest for Weary Workers

was during last summer enjoyed by several teachers, who expressed their gratitude for the rest and change afforded. This 'Rest' was the suggestion of 'A. L. O. E.,' who gave the first contributions to start it, and who, in her mission-field in India, is glad to learn that this effort has been the means of refreshing and comforting many a real weary worker. "The contributors to this fund are but few."

Finances.

With respect to the finances of the Parent Society, for which the Committee are directly responsible, they have to report a falling off in the amount received from the public during the year.

A reference to the balance sheet will show that £843 16s. 6d. has been received in subscriptions, and in donations £356 10s. These amounts have been augmented by legacies and other extraneous sources of income to £2,566 16s. 3d.; but the Committee feel it to be right to draw special attention to the fact that the subscription list last year was less than £1,000, and this, be it remembered, is the only reliable source of income. In the same interval they have made grants to the schools directly of nearly £2,000, besides indirect payments to the schools, and the working expenses of this Society.

The year was commenced with a balance of £1,170, which was mainly the result of a liberal response to an appeal made shortly before the close of the last financial year, and to a generous gift of £500 from an anonymous donor. The whole of this balance, with the income of the year, has been absorbed, with the exception of £265 15s., and this balance has not sufficed for the grants already made to the schools.

Were it not for a moderate reserve fund, the result of some large legacies in the past (for the Committee have never been able to husband the ordinary resources), they would be compelled to suspend the payment of grants, the effect of which they feel sure would be to close many of the Schools which depend so largely upon the help afforded by this Union.

The blessing of the past the Committee would regard as an earnest of the future. But there is still much to be done. They cannot overtake the work. It is not the time to cease nor yet to slacken effort. They intend to increase their God-like efforts, in the belief that a Christian public will sanction and support them.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

HELD AT EXETER HALL ON MONDAY, MAY 10*th*, 1880.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., PRESIDED.

The Thirty-sixth Anniversary, and the Distribution of Scholars' Prizes took place on Monday evening, May 10th, at Exeter Hall, which was densely filled in every part. The chair was taken by the President, the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, and on the platform were Alderman Sir R. Carden, M.P.; S. D. Waddy, Esq., Q.C.; R. Stone, Esq.; Dr. Cross; Mr. George Smith, of Coleville; T. Brooker, Esq.; R. J. Snape, Esq.; T. A. Denny, Esq.; the Rev. Mr. Moran; the Revs. Canon Alcock, Dr. M'Auslane, W. H. Lawrence, Burman Cassin, J. F. Sargeant, Dr. Donald Fraser, &c. As usual at recent Anniversaries, the most interesting feature in the programme was the presence and singing of several hundred young people of both sexes—the exact number was 564—connected with Ragged Schools in various parts of London, who had travelled to their central destination with the accompaniment of bright-looking picturesque banners, inscribed with the names of their respective schools. At the meeting the banners were ranged round the platform, which was almost exclusively occupied by scholars and their teachers. Mr. W. C. HARRIS gave an organ performance just before the time for commencing the meeting, namely six o'clock; and at this hour, to a moment, the proceedings were opened with the singing by the assembly of the hymn beginning, "Let us with a gladsome mind," followed by the offering of prayer by the Rev. W. H. LAWRENCE, of Melbourne. The singing of the children as a choir, under the skilful instruction of the leader, Mr. J. PROUDMAN, then commenced, and, as is always the case on such occasions, afforded great delight to the adult portion of the meeting. They sang successively "Ye tribes of Adam join," "The May Shout" (repeated in response to a tremendous encore), and "London Streets."

Mr. JOHN KIRK, Secretary, then read an outline of the Report. *See page* 84.

The children then sang, "Trip lightly over trouble," and "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace."

The Noble CHAIRMAN next distributed an immense number of book prizes and certificates, these being received by teachers on behalf of those whom they represented, amid frequent outbursts of applause from some portions of the spectators, the name of each school in succession being announced by means of a board held up to the view of all from the platform.

The boys and girls taking prizes on this occasion were from the following schools:—Amicable Row, 6 prizes; Brewer's Court, 10; Brentford, 1; Britannia Row, 30; Broad Street, 2; Brunswick Street, 3; Butler's Place, 7; Castle Lane, 3; Chequer Alley, 16; Collingwood Street, 10; Croydon, 5; Copperfield Road, 1; Dartford, 16; Deptford, 4; Devonshire Street, 2; Dove Row, 4; East Greenwich, 4; Ernest Street, 7; Exeter Buildings, 5;

Field Lane, 17; Fox Court, 19; Gee Street, 5; George Yard, 37; Gravesend, 6; Gray's Yard, 8; Grotto Passage, 2; Hatfield Street, 3; Hope Street, 9; Horseferry Road, 7; Johnson's Court, 5; Jurston Street, 18; Kentish Town, 7; King Edward Street, 44; Kingsland, 18; Lambeth, 20; Lamb and Flag, 47; Lansdowne Place, 7; Little Coram Street, 1; Little Saffron Hill, 2; Lower Park Road, 5; Marigold Place, 21; Milton Yard, 1; Morton Road, 14; Nelson Street, 2; New Tothill Street, 4; Ogle Mews, 17; Perkins's Rents, 7; Richmond Street, 10; Ratcliff, 4; Robert Street, 5; Rufford's Buildings, 8; St. James's Place, 6; Tottenham Road, 6; Victory Place, 5; Vincent Street, 3; Wentworth Street, 7; West Greenwich, 10; Wilkes Street, 4; Windsor, 4; York Mews, 2.

The CHAIRMAN then said:—My Christian friends, we are now about to proceed to a very interesting part of this evening's business, one in which I am sure you will all concur with me and my friends behind me—the presentation of a testimonial to our old and valued friend and long-established Secretary, Mr. Joseph Gent. I shall call upon my good friend Mr. Williams to read to you that testimonial, and I am certain it will receive your hearty assent.

Mr. H. R. WILLIAMS then read the following:—

"The Committee of the Ragged School Union hereby desire to place upon record their high appreciation of the long and valued services of Mr. Joseph G. Gent, who, for a period of thirty-six years, has laboured incessantly and with much fidelity to promote the well-being and happiness of the most degraded of the juvenile population of this great city. From the formation of the Ragged School Union in 1844 he continued for five years as a voluntary worker to display, with characteristic zeal, his great interest in the cause of suffering humanity, and entered heartily into the various schemes for ameliorating the condition of the very large class of ragged youth of both sexes which at that time needed the strong hand of Christian sympathy and benevolence to rescue them from the degradation and neglect into which they had been suffered to drift. In the year 1849, at the unanimous request of the Committee, he accepted the arduous and responsible position of Secretary, and continued faithfully and zealously to represent the interests of the Society in that capacity till the close of the year 1879. During this long period of thirty-six years he laboured by various means to extend the blessings contemplated by the establishment of the Ragged School Union, and upon his forced retirement from this office in consequence of ill-health, he was unanimously elected to serve as a member of the Parent Committee, and, as occasion might offer, to act as Consulting Secretary. The Committee earnestly pray that God's blessing may still rest upon him, and that his valuable life may be spared to witness still further the results of his long and laborious efforts for the outcast and neglected youth of the metropolis.

"This testimony of the Committee's esteem was presented at the Annual Meeting of the subscribers, teachers, and friends of the Ragged School Union, held in Exeter Hall, on Monday, May 10th, 1880.

"Signed on behalf of the Committee,

"SHAFTESBURY, President."

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY then spoke as follows:—My Christian

friends, it is now my duty to present this testimonial to the man who is the subject of it; and I shall therefore say a few words in your presence to our common friend. Now, friend Joseph Gent, it is a very great pleasure to me that I have to perform such a duty as this, and to be the representative of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, and the representative of the friends of the Ragged School Union, and the representative of all those who in faith and fear and love of God care for the destitute and the outcast in general. I say it is a great honour and a great pleasure to me to have been selected to present to you this testimonial in the presence of so large an assembly. And let me say to all here present—and I hope these words will be valued for themselves and not merely as coming from me—that this testimonial illustrates a great, grand, and noble truth—namely, that in this free country it is not necessary that a man should be highly educated or have a great fortune, to be of incalculable use in the sight of God and man in promoting the benefit, temporal and eternal, of his fellow-creatures. No man living, my friends, has a greater right to speak of Joseph Gent than I have. I have been associated with him for nearly forty years. We have not been on ordinary terms. I have known him intimately: I have acted with him frequently by night and by day; I have visited with him the dens of human misery and wickedness; and I have ever found him active, zealous, intelligent, honourable, and sympathetic. He feared no responsibility. Having one object before him which was so great and so good, he felt that to be quite sufficient. He was always ready to devote his time, his talents, and everything he possessed to the accomplishment of the immediate object before him, though it may perhaps have been no more than the rescue of the most wretched creature to be found in this vast metropolis. Therefore, my friends—and I repeat that I am sure I shall meet with your hearty concurrence—I now present to him this memorial, with an earnest prayer to Almighty God that his life may long be spared for further service in this world, and that when the time shall come when, in the providence of God, he shall be gathered to his fathers, he may be found among that noble host who shall surround for ever the throne of their Redeemer, who have endeavoured to discharge the great duty to which they were called in this life, and who have done all that in them lay to advance the glory of God, the spread of the Church of Christ, and the eternal welfare of the whole human race.

The Memorial Address thus presented by the Noble Earl was then placed in front of the platform in such a position that a large portion of the assembly could distinctly view it. It was, in form, a beautiful specimen of illuminated writing, encircled by a handsome border and enriched by a gilt frame, being artistically a work of considerable merit, executed by a former ragged school pupil, who was on the platform.

Mr. JOSEPH G. GENT, who evinced much emotion and was received with most hearty and protracted cheers, spoke as follows:—My Lord Shaftesbury and my dear friends,—After what has been said I scarcely know

how to speak. But, my Lord, I must say that I am delighted on this occasion beyond what language can express. Looking at that beautiful testimonial I am reminded of the old adage that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." *There* is the "thing of beauty," and *here* in my heart is "the joy," and that joy will remain "for ever," that is as long as life may last. The value of the testimonial is greatly enhanced by my receiving it from your lordship's hands, as well as by its bearing your lordship's signature. No small portion of its value arises from the occasion of the presentation. For the honour you have conferred upon me I thank you, my lord, most respectfully; and most heartily do I thank the Committee of the Ragged School Union for this public expression of their approval of the spirit and manner in which the duties of my office have for thirty-six years been discharged. I had no idea that such an honour as this awaited me till I saw it printed in the programme. I thought the Committee had exhausted their stock of honours last winter, when they so kindly relieved me of duties that I could no longer effectively discharge, and when they so generously provided for my future comfort. They did more, for they invited me to join them in the Board of Management, and afterwards created for me an honorary office, the filling of which would give me opportunities to render aid to my successor, as it was needed by him, and my health permitted me to give. And now, in addition to all this, comes the very distinctive honour of this presentation. I value it all the more because it is something tangible—something that I can, when my work is quite done, leave behind as a heirloom to my children, and to my children's children. It is with the deepest gratitude I accept the presentation so kindly made this evening.

The children then sang "Gentle Smiles," and after this, with touching sweetness, "What a friend we have in Jesus!"

The Rev. Dr. McAUSLANE then delivered an address to the children. Standing with his face towards them, as they sat over nearly the whole surface of the platform, he said: I have chosen, my young friends, a position in which my voice will reach those who are on my right (the adults in the front of the platform), because I have found that in speaking to children it is a very excellent thing indeed to take along with you those who are not children, what is said being, in some respects, suitable to them as well as their juniors. Now, my young friends, many of you have been, I have no doubt, to the Zoological Gardens; you have seen there a number of very interesting and curious creatures indeed, and I, on the present occasion, wish to take one of them—I shall not bring him here, I should be afraid to do that—and I will call upon him to be your teacher and mine for a few minutes. I don't mean the lion, nor the tiger, nor the elephant, but I mean the serpent. Just suppose that you were looking at a serpent, that you were listening to a serpent. There are four things concerning which we ought to remember. It is very careful about its heart. The heart of a serpent is just beneath its head, and it knows very well indeed

that in its heart is the seat of life. Hence, when it sees an enemy approaching — an enemy which it cannot overcome—it endeavours to shield its heart in perfect safety. So we see it running away to the sand and burying its head there, or making for the river and plunging its head in that. In fact, it will go to any place, no matter where it may be, if by going there it can so place its head as to save its heart. Sometimes the body of a serpent has been found fearfully mangled, while the heart was not injured. Now, my dear young friends, be very careful about your beauty. You look remarkably well. Yes, you do; and I hope you will all look quite as well for many, many years to come. But mind, it will depend very much on your tempers whether you live long or not, or look well or not. Some young people begin to grumble very early, they grumble very frequently, and people will be able to see the traces of their grumbling in their faces all the days of their lives. Be very careful, my young friends, about your minds. I am so thankful that you are receiving instruction, and that, too, of a very valuable kind; and I am so thankful to hear from his lordship, our chairman, that the testimonial given to our friend Mr. Gent for his services during so many years of his life—a testimonial which is so beautiful and attractive—was executed from first to last by a boy who used to attend a Ragged School. I am glad, too, to be able to add that he is now on the platform. But while I want you to take care of your bodies and your minds, let me say above all, like the serpent, take care of your hearts. Whatever you love you will try to attain, be it a book, an article of dress, a place, or a companion. Whomsoever you may love to walk with you will very likely become what he is, whether he is good or bad. "He that walketh with the wise shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed." This is the reason why that good old book, the Bible, says so much about the heart. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "My son, my daughter, give me thy heart." The serpent is very careful about its eyes. Sometimes the serpent's eyes are smitten with disease, and then they grow heavy, and hazy, and dim. Under these circumstances the serpent is not by any means idle. It goes away in search of a plant that it knows very well. That plant is called fennel, and the moment the serpent obtains that plant it begins to extract the juice out of it. If you were on the spot you would see the serpent taking the juice out, and rubbing its eyes with it. In almost every case this clears away the film, and in some cases it has restored the sight of a serpent when it was almost entirely gone. Now, I see on the platform some young girls who have pretty eyes, and of course they all want to be very careful about their eyes. But do you know we have got eyes belonging to the soul? That is a fact. I close my eyes just now, the eyes of the body, and what do I see? The church in which I preach, my happy home, places which I visit, friends I love, and a great deal more. Now, it is by the eyes of the soul that you can see your duty to God, your duty to Christ, your duty to your teachers, your duty to one another. There is a

great adversary in the world who tries to blind the eyes of the soul, and especially, I think, the eyes of the soul in young people. My young friends, will you habitually put up this prayer every day—it is an old prayer, but it is a prayer which we all need: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law"? And will you likewise every day read a little of the Book — the Bible — especially those portions of it which tell about Christ the Son of Man and the Son of God? and depend upon it that the reading of the Book will be to the eyes of the soul what the juice of the plant called fennel is to the eyes of the serpent. The serpent, let me say further, is very careful about approaching storms. There are many people in London who could not tell you when a storm was coming if you were to give them fifty guineas. They know nothing about these things. Profit and speculation they take a deep interest in, but they take no interest in storms. Our sailors know something about storms, and there are now some men in the world who are so clever that they beat even sailors in this matter. I am glad, however, that these persons are sometimes mistaken, because if they were not they would get too proud, and might perhaps even try to shut God out of the world, as some men would like to do. Now, the serpent has instinct and observation which tell him when a storm is coming. What do you think he does when he knows that a storm is coming? Does it wait till it is come? Not so, it takes greater care of itself than that. I will tell you what it does; it wriggles away as fast as it can to a mound of sand, or a crevice in a rock, or some other hiding-place, for refuge, and there it waits till the storm is over and it can come out and be perfectly safe. My young friends, I am not going to speak to you of material storms, but of other storms which are much more fearful than material ones. If any person should ask you to read such a book as "Jack Sheppard," there is a storm coming; you run away from it as rapidly as possible. So if you are called upon to listen to a man who is speaking what is untrue, don't stay, there is a storm of falsehood which might injure you if you remained; do not listen to one word. The Bible speaks to you about the storm of iniquity and sin; and, my dear young friends, I know of no refuge but the Son of Man and the Son of God. I dare say you have heard the hymn beginning thus—I hope you will all realise it in your experience:

> "Jesus! refuge of my soul,
> Let me to Thy bosom fly."

Another thought and I have done. The serpent is very careful about music. You know that in the East there are a great many serpent-charmers. They try to get hold of the serpent in order to make a profit out of it, and in order to do this they use both vocal and instrumental music. Many serpents have been caught in that way, especially young ones; but there are some serpents that are not to be caught in that way. I will tell you what a serpent did. One day a serpent-charmer being near a serpent, tried to make it hear his voice; but the serpent did not want to hear the voice, and still less the music, lest it should become so charmed as to be captured.

So it very wisely put one ear in the soil. And what did it do with the other ear? It gathered its tail round the other ear, and thus became perfectly deaf to the music of the serpent-charmer. I have been very much delighted, my young friends, in listening to your singing this evening, and I hope you will go on cultivating your musical powers, and use them, not to lead others astray, but to promote your own happiness and that of others in this world, and in glorifying God hereafter. But the devil has taken to music. I am sorry to say that a great many young people have been led astray by music, by hearing songs to which they ought not to have listened. I like songs of a good kind, but there are songs which tend to lead young people astray, and to taint mind and heart. There is one song which I have sung for many years, and which I hope to sing again; I mean the song, "Home, Sweet Home." I am very glad, my young friends, to have had an opportunity of addressing these few words to you, and I trust that, through the aid afforded to you by the Ragged School Union and its friends, you will, if God spare you, be enabled to confer such blessings as you have received upon other children—children occupying not the highest, but the lowest positions in society.

S. D. WADDY, Esq., Q.C., moved:

"That the Report, an abstract of which has been read, and the Financial Statement submitted, be adopted, printed, and published, and that the gentlemen named in the printed list be the Committee for the ensuing year, 1880-1."

He said:—My Lord, with my usual good fortune I have to perform a task which is necessarily most distasteful to this audience. I have to say something on that most terrible of all questions, the question of finance; but this duty having been enforced upon me, I will endeavour to discharge it during the two or three minutes that I have to occupy. I am going to talk to you, my friends, about figures, and this because the secretary has told me that the Union is in difficulties, and that if we don't mind what we are about we may get into greater difficulties. It is an unpleasant fact that the Society, having begun the past year with a nice little balance of £1,170, the year is gone and the balance is gone with it. Now, to put the matter in very plain language, it amounts to this—that if things continue as they now are we shall go to the bad at the rate of £1,000 per annum. That does not look very well in prospect for Ragged School children; and the question therefore is, what can be done in order to get rid of that very unpleasant state of things. I find in looking at the figures that the accounts show that the contributions of all kinds during the past year amounted to £2,500, while the expenses reached £2,500. There have indeed been other sources of income besides contributions, such as interest, &c.; but I am now talking about what the English people and the Church of Christ have given for the support of Ragged Schools in the past year, and this only amounts—and let us look the fact in the face—to £1,600, which, according to my notion, is a great deal too little. I want you all quietly and calmly to consider this state of things. I know it is pleasanter to listen to the singing of the children

than to hear about the position of the finances; but you ought to know what is the present pecuniary condition of this Union, and I believe it would do you a great deal more good to get hold of the facts connected with this subject than even to listen to such singing as we have heard this evening. I want you to get hold of one fact and to act accordingly—the fact that with the rate of contributions in the last year, and with the rate of expenditure in the same period, you are not £1,000 merely, but £2,000 a year to the bad. I know very well that there is something to be said on the other side I know that the last year was a year of bad trade and bad harvests, and that a variety of causes concurred to keep down receipts. I am not so unreasonable as to forget that or to ignore it. But, on the other hand, I would remark that we are all too ready to excuse ourselves for neglecting to make sacrifices for God, and I would add that now that there seems to be a prospect of good trade and good harvests—I hope that if these blessings do come back to us we shall take care to devote the first-fruits to the Lord, and if we do we can certainly find no worthier means of such devoton, at all events for the present, than the bringing them to the exchequer of this admirable Society. Now one word more. I know very well that the present time is an exceedingly critical time for Ragged Schools. There are some people who are beginning to think that the call for Ragged Schools is not now as urgent and as loud as it was some years ago. There is a strong temptation, you know, even among Christian men to find excuses for neglect of duty; and this temptation has been seen especially in the present case. Many persons seem now inclined to say in effect, "Now that the nation has recognised its duty in reference to the poorest class of children, there cannot be the same need as there was formerly for the work of Ragged Schools." I don't for a moment mean to deny that there is some basis of truth in that view of the matter; but I have been perfectly amazed to observe how vast and varied are the fields of usefulness, and the careful tending and provision for the poor and the destitute in different departments of Christian effort, which are in one way or other connected with the Ragged School Union. I have made a list of the various agencies to which I allude. It includes Day Shcools, Sunday Schools, Night Schools, Prayer Meetings, Bible Classes, Ragged Churches, Parents' Meetings, Men's Clubs, Bands of Hope, Lending Libraries, Penny Banks, Clothing Clubs, Boot and Shoe Clubs, Dinners, Infant Nurseries or Crèches, Shoeblacks, Visitation, &c. There is a mass of agencies which could not be maintained by any other means than that which is employed by the Union. Don't be misled into supposing that the State can do all the work that you do. The State is now, thank God, doing a great deal. It is something for the State to be able to say that it has now fully recognised the duty of educating her children; but, after all, there are a great many children who have not been reached up to the present time by the Legislature. You may fine fathers and mothers who don't send their children to school. But what are you to do with children who have no father or mother to be fined?

What are you to do with those little ones who have no one to take care of them? I remember once seeing a little creature of this kind whose appearance and words struck me very much indeed, and who was running about a court not far from a Ragged School. She was a little black-eyed girl, with her hair in tangles, and shoeless. If I were to say what she had on—it would be very difficult to describe. Whatever they might once have been, it would be very difficult to say what they were then. She was asked, "Where does your father live?" "Father!" she said, "never had one." "Where does your mother live?" "Mother's gone for a watch." I thought it very unlikely that a person in that state of life should have a watch; but it turned out that what the child meant was that her mother was gone to prison for taking a watch which belonged to somebody else, and there seemed to be nobody on earth to take care of that little one while her mother was in prison. She had a nice little face, with a laughing expression; but there she was, left to sleep in a doorway, or wherever she could find shelter, until she was told, perhaps by the police, to "move on." I should like to know what the School Board are going to do for a child like that. How are they to get hold of such children, or get a grip upon them? What I want to point out to you, my friends, before sitting down, is that the work of the Ragged School Union is not yet finished. The School Board has done something. I pray God that our educational system may be so improved and developed, that every child may be educated under the authority of the State; but until that has been done there will still be a great and pressing work to be done by this Society. Now, my friends, what follows from that? Why, it follows that you must give a great deal more for the support of the work than you have given in the past year; it follows that the deficit of £1,000 which I have talked about must be made up, and as you will not be so likely to help to make it up this evening, in a bad humour as in a good one, I will not keep you any longer.

The Rev. J. F. SARGEANT, in seconding the resolution, began by drawing a comparison between London and other famous cities, ancient and modern. Athens, he observed, was the most classic of cities, Rome the most interesting, while Jerusalem had been regarded as the holiest of cities, and Paris as the brightest; but London, with its four millions of inhabitants, and a radius of twelve miles, in many respects surpassed all the most celebrated capitals or cities of ancient or modern times. In London there were 100,000 people belonging to the criminal class; there were as many people receiving parochial relief as formed the whole population of Brighton; and while there was a large number of persons who lived in splendid houses and rolled in luxury, there were also multitudes who had hardly enough to keep them alive. Further, while there were many people who were well versed in all the "isms" and all the "ologies," there were multitudes who could neither read nor write. There were to be seen in London the extremes of wealth and poverty, the extremes of vice and virtue, the extremes of knowledge and ignor-

ance. London was, indeed, an extremely interesting place. One of his favourite journeys was that from Tyburn to Whitechapel, and he was always struck with the great variety to be met with on the route. On the one hand you saw the haunts of vice and misery, but on the other hand you found many agencies for improving the moral and spiritual condition of the masses. Here was to be seen the depôt of the British and Foreign Bible Society, or the headquarters of the Scripture Readers' Society, or of the City Mission, whence men sallied forth on their errands of mercy. Among the various useful organisations he attached special importance to the Ragged School Union, and he felt great pleasure in taking part in the the proceedings that evening.

The motion was then adopted; after which the children sang, "Polly wants a cracker," which was encored, and partially repeated while the collection was being made and the organ was being played.

The Rev. Dr. DONALD FRASER moved the following resolution :—

"It is satisfactory to find that the hope expressed at the last Annual Meeting, that greater efforts would be made for the gathering of neglected youths into the schools, has been realised, and that 3,000 additional boys and girls have been brought under instruction during the year. The Committee recognise gratefully this success, but they are at the same time convinced that there are thousands more needing the watchful oversight of the Christian teacher, and express the hope that during the coming year similar efforts will be continued with still greater results."

He said:—We have heard of the greatness of London, and it is a city to be proud of. Its vast extent, its prodigious population, its peace and order, its waste and common, its monuments of age, its vigour of youth—it is in these and other respects beyond what any city ever reached. It is a wonder of the world. But it is also a city to be ashamed of. For the eyes of those who look to moral welfare as more than material grandeur and numerical force, there are sad blots on the greatness of London—blots on the splendour of many who are rich and luxurious, and blots on the condition of many of the poor, whom ignorance and intemperance make poorer than they need to be. In crowded and unhealthy rooms are born and bred many children, who must be familiar from earliest years with sights and sounds that cannot but deprave the mind. Little wonder if they should grow up more like sharp and crafty animals than as Christian men and women. Yet in many of these children, thus put to grievous wrong and disadvantage, there are bright minds and warm hearts that would repay culture manifold, and those who have known that class of children in London best, and worked longest for their good, will be the most ready to say that "love's labour" is not lost on the poor boys and girls of our metropolis. Sympathy for such children was stirred some years ago by several of our popular writers. Mr. Dickens touched consciences and hearts by his "Poor Jo" in the streets of London, in his tale of "Bleak House," as Hood did on behalf of the underpaid sempstresses by his "Song of the Shirt," and Mrs. Browning did by her "Song for the Ragged Schools of London,"

written in Rome. Our noble Chairman and others likeminded not merely spoke and wrote about the wretchedness, but applied a remedy —set up the Ragged Schools and the auxiliary agencies which the Report of this evening enumerates. London has deep cause to be thankful that for thirty-six years these schools have been maintained, relieving want, checking crime, removing ignorance, spreading moral convictions and religious reverence and faith. Hundreds and thousands who have passed through these schools, or been indirectly benefited by them, scattered now over England, the Colonies, and the American States, or earning honest bread as British tars upon the sea, have to thank God, and His servants under Him, for having made life to them worth living; and we must all give thanks and rejoice to-night to hear that the cause does not languish, and in some directions the usefulness of the great organisation grows. Let men who would serve their country by all means study political economy and social science, and find out what great cities must needs be as London is, with a gin-shop at almost every street corner, and whether every subject must have liberty to impoverish not himself only but his family, and throw his children on public charity. But while they are investigating these questions, and while something is being done to compel education and to better the dwellings of the poor, don't let the children suffer, for not they but their fathers and ours have brought them and us to this social state. Don't let them suffer while we discuss possible ameliorations or preventive measures, as Ginx's Baby was left to suffer while the parishes were spending much money on a law plea to determine to which of them the unhappy infant belonged. The "People's Anthem" is a little poem written by one of our minor Scottish bards, Robert Nicoll. Its burden is "God save the poor," and thus it ends:—

"Give them staunch honesty,
Let their pride manly be.
God save the poor!
Help them to hold the light,
Give them both truth and might,
Lord of all life and light!
God save the poor!"

Mr. T. ANTHONY DENNY said:—In seconding the resolution which has been moved by Dr. D. Fraser, I feel that I should ill discharge my duty if I did not say something in acknowledgment of the excellent management of the Committee as exemplified in the splendid meeting this evening. This gathering shows that there is still some use for old Exeter Hall. Certainly this is one of the largest meetings that I have ever seen here, and it shows what great interest large numbers of people still take in the work of the Ragged School Union. There are two things in the resolution that have struck me very much. One is that the "hope expressed" last year that "greater efforts would be made for the gathering of neglected youths into the schools" has been realised, 3,000 additional boys and girls having been brought under instruction during the past year. That is a great fact, and it is difficult fully to realise its importance. But, further, the Committee say that there are thousands of other children who require to be gathered in, and express a hope that this will be

done, and I think we shall all wish them "God speed." I was looking the other day at an American paper, in which was this very remarkable statement. It was there stated that in the latter part of the last century there was in America a poor girl who was utterly abandoned and neglected; that this girl's progeny had been traced out in Upper Hudson County, in the State of New York; and that it appeared there were descended from her no fewer than 900 souls, of whom 200 belonged distinctly to the criminal class, while the remaining 700 were paupers or something worse. When, therefore, you consider how much evil to society may arise from one child having been neglected and uncared for, surely you must feel the force of the words in which we are told to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove. While, however, it is a grand thing to look after temporal interests, it is a grander one to look after spiritual interests, and I am sure this is the first thought of your committee. Let me ask you, my dear children [here the speaker turned himself towards the choir on the platform], never to forget to "fear God and keep His commandments." For this is the whole duty of man. I want you all to be truthful. Never condescend to tell a lie. Be honest, be pure in your lives. Love God for Himself and still more for what He has done for you in the great gift of His blessed Son. Let us all love the Son for His own great gift of Himself for us, and let us keep His commandments, and we shall have His approval in this life and a glorious reward in eternity.

The children then sang "Joy Bells."

Sir R. W. CARDEN, M.P., moved the following:—

"That the hearty thanks of this meeting be given to the noble Chairman, the Earl of Shaftesbury, for his kindness in presiding on this occasion, for his continued services to this Society, for his practical sympathy with misery in its various forms, and especially for his life-long consecration of time, talent, and energy to the cause of rescuing poor children from vice, crime, and want, and bringing them under humane and Christian influences."

The Rev. B. CASSIN said he had been asked not to make a speech, but he never felt so unwilling to accede to a request in his life, because he felt that to sit down without expressing his hearty admiration and gratitude for the long, self-denying, and blessed labours of Lord Shaftesbury would be doing himself a wrong. But it was his lordship's command that he should not make a speech, and inasmuch as he always obeyed whatever he might tell him to do, he would sit down by heartily seconding the resolution, "and," added the rev. gentleman, "by asking you to look there [pointing to the children] if you want to see what has been done here."

The resolution was then carried by acclamation.

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY, who on rising was greeted with a demonstration of regard and affection from adults and children alike, exceeding almost any made on any previous occasion of the same kind, said: My good Friends,—The resolution which you have been so good as to pass was, I believe, not a mere

matter of form. I can assure you that the thanks which I give you in return come entirely from the heart, and are no mere utterance of words. Now, it is quite right that we should close our meeting as soon as possible [it was then a quarter to nine], because many of the children have been here a considerable time and have a considerable distance to go; to which I may add that I have myself occupied the post of chairman to-day since three o'clock. However, I want, my friends, to say a word or two from the point of view from which my friend Mr. Waddy has spoken. Mr. Waddy said he very much feared lest people should suppose, on account of the operations of the School Board, that there is no longer any necessity for the Ragged School Union. The description just given by Dr. Donald Fraser is, in fact, a description not only of the past, but also of the present. There are children in all parts of this metropolis who are not seen by any one except those who dive down into the lowest recesses of human poverty and misery. There is a large class of persons in respectable stations in society who take no cognisance whatever of those who are so far beneath them in the social scale. There are about one hundred thousand people of the humblest class who are perpetually running round and round this great metropolis, never remaining more than about three months in any one place. How are the children belonging to this mass of wanderers to be taught, how are they to be caught, how are they to be saved from ruin, except through the system which we have established? Let me tell you a fact—a triumphant fact—in reference to our work; it is that, such is the effect produced by the care and tenderness shown in the treatment of poor children in Ragged Schools, that it is very frequently found that when a child who has been in one of them has gone to another district, the first question that boy or girl has asked is, "Where is the Ragged School?" and on finding out where it was that child has gone to it. This is one great result of the work of good men and women as teachers in Ragged Schools. The doctor has told me not to exert my voice, but notwithstanding that I wish to speak to you for one or two minutes longer. I wish to appeal to you, my friends, and to the Christian public generally, not to allow the Ragged School system to drop, and not to allow our operations to be curtailed for want of money. For nearly forty years now we have carried on this system of inexpressible blessing among the poorest and most neglected class of children in this great capital; and the benefits that have arisen from it, socially, morally, politically, and financially—are such as have never arisen from any other system of tuition and elevation. I tell you that there are still thousands and tens of thousands of the most destitute and miserable portion of the human race who receive care and instruction, for time and for eternity, in Ragged Schools, in a manner and to an extent which they could have received nowhere else. If, then, you have the means of assisting in carrying on this work, will you refuse them? God forbid. If my life should be prolonged for another year, and if during that year the Ragged School system were to fall, I should not die in the course of

nature, I should die of a broken heart. I see so many thousands of children still needing the benefits of that system. Happen what may, I and my friends here will persevere. We shall continue in this work. We hope and we pray for your support; but if you will not give us your support, we shall, I tell you, still persevere so long as there is a mind to be instructed, a heart to be converted, and a soul to be saved.

The children then sang the hymn beginning "Our blest Redeemer," and the proceedings closed with the singing of "God save the Queen," and the Benediction, which was pronounced by the Rev. J. H. MORAN.

A CHILD OF THE STREETS.

An incident referred to by S. D. WADDY, Esq., Q.C., *at the Annual Meeting of the Ragged School Union, May 10th, 1880.*

THE night was dark, and the wind was cold:
As I walked, I chanced to meet
A little girl, about eight years old,
Alone in a London street.

A bundle of rags, it seemed to me,
Was hanging from head to feet,
With her face unwashed, her hair unkempt,
Was trudging along the street.

"Where is your father, my little maid?"
Were the words I spoke to greet.
"Never had one," quickly the child replied—
That child of a London street.

"Where is your mother?" I asked the child,
And, free from the least deceit,
"*She's gone for a watch*," the child replied—
That child of a London street.

Wondering whatever the child could mean,
I felt *nonplussed* complete,
Till I learnt the mother to prison had gone
For theft in a London street.

"Where do you live?" I questioned still
(She tried to make a retreat):
"'Bout here," she said, and points to the doors
On either side of the street.

Yes! here in the passages, grim and foul,
Hid from the man on his beat,
The child found shelter throughout the night,
By day she lived in the street.

Homeless! and destitute! What can be done?
What can be done? I repeat.
Bid her attend the Ragged School near,
Gather her in from the street.

There she will find both shelter and food,
For often she's nothing to eat;
There she'll be tended with love and with care—
That child of a London street.

There she will hear of the Saviour on high,
And may be she'll sit at His feet,
And learn from her teacher to tread in the way
That leads to the "Golden street."

* * * *

This is the cause we are asked to support,
And for this good work we meet—
To gather the poor and the destitute in
From every London street.

London, May, 1880. J. E.

HEALTH AT HOME.

By Dr. B. W. Richardson, and Others, at the Annual Congress of the Sanitary Institute.

Dr. Richardson's remarks certainly aim at an ideal state; and in the homes of the very poor his suggestions are impossible of being carried into practice; nevertheless, his views should be widely spread, in order that the question of sanitary reform should be continually uppermost in the minds of the community.

He commenced by remarking that the old adage, "there was no place like home," was one peculiarly appropriate to his subject, for the river of national health must rise from the homes of the nation. Those who were engaged in forwarding sanitary work would do little good until each home was included in the plan of the work.

Dr. Richardson offered to his hearers a few "golden rules" for securing health at home. Whether a home be large or small, he would say, "Give it light." In a dark and gloomy house one could never see the dirt that polluted it. Not only was the mind saddened in a home that was not flushed with light, but sunlight was of itself directly useful to health. The practice of placing sick people in dark and closely-curtained rooms was alike pernicious to body and spirit. In sickness and in health, in infancy, youth, middle age, and old age, in all seasons, for the benefit of the mind and the welfare of the body, sunlight is a bearer and sustainer of health. If it was good to make all possible use of sunlight, it was good equally to make as little use of artificial light—lamps, candles, and gaslight; the latter especially robbed the air of its vital constituent and supplied in return products injurious to life. Within reasonable limits the sooner we went to rest

the better. It was of the greatest importance in a healthy home to let every person have a separate bed, and the clothes should be light and warm. We require in the cold season of winter, when the nights are long, much more of sleep than in summer. On the longest day in the year seven hours' sleep is sufficient for most men and women who are in the prime of life; on the shortest day nine hours are not over much; and for those who are weakly ten or even twelve hours may be taken with real advantage. It is not idleness to indulge to that extent; but an actual saving, a storing up of invigorating existence for the future. He did not say go to bed at all seasons with the sun and rise with it, because in this climate that would not be at all seasons posssible; but, as a general principle, they should make the sun their fellow-workman. Follow him as soon as you are able to rest, and do not let him stare at you in bed many hours after he has commenced his daily course.

The important results arising from each having a separate bed had been shown at the Industrial Schools at Anerley, where each scholar had his or her own bed.

The mortality had been reduced to three in 1,000 annually.

From time to time a fire should be made in every bedroom, that a free current of atmospheric air might sweep through or from open doors and windows.

Dry scrubbing was the best mode of cleaning the floor.

His last rule he took from the more strict of our Jewish fellow-subjects, that of a complete household cleansing once a year—the cleansing of every article great and small, of every wall and floor, door and lintel, and the removal and destruction of all organic refuse, however minute.

Edwin Chadwick, C.B., said that since the introduction of sanitary principles in Croydon the death rate had been reduced one-third. The death rate amongst the children of the wage-class was still excessive. They could not expect all at once to introduce the means of prevention adopted at the Anerley School (which had been referred to), where the sanitary conditions had annihilated the great mass of children's diseases. Such space for children's bedding, such air, skin, and clothes, and wall cleanliness, such ventilation, such physical exercise, such baths, were generally impracticable; but much might be done. Amongst most desirable reforms he suggested the institution of *créches*, the establishment of well-appointed Infant Schools, with the service of an examination of a medical officer of health on alternate days, and the exercise of power on the detection of symptoms of incipient disease.

Mr. G. J. Symons, F.R.S., read a paper on "Pure Water." Rain was condensed vapour; but vapour raised from dirty water

was clean. It was particularly important to guard against the pollution of water-supply. The purity of water in the mains would be of little moment to the people, if the domestic fittings and arrangements were not what they should be. He condemned the water-butt as a foul, slimy, open receptacle for blacks, leaves, and etceteras, which he would not specify, and showed the fallacy of trusting to a filter, unless it was frequently cleansed. Several causes were tending to make pure water increasingly scarce in this country: such as the growth of population and its aggregation in large towns, and the cultivation of moorlands. The moorlands, whence much of our best drinking-water comes, are yearly being brought into cultivation (which means treated with manures, &c., which will dissolve and run into the streams). As there seems very strong reasons against the supply of two qualities of water to each house, the total volume of pure water required for our large towns is immense.

DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

So much sympathy has been shown to the suffering poor in Ireland during the winter, that we feel sure your readers will be interested in hearing of a work that has been carried on by some ladies, members of the Society of Friends, in Dublin.

The Committee have sent yarn, wool, needles, and patterns, with money to pay for the knitting, to ministers' wives, and other ladies, who are living in distressed localities.

A lady from Skibbereen writes:—"I gave out all the common wool and yarn to-day, when the poor women came from the country to get their week's supply of meal, and I was obliged to send sixteen women away without any, as the stock of fingering and yarn was exhausted, and I did not like to risk giving them the best wool till they have proved themselves to be good knitters.

"These poor destitute women with large families, are at present kept from starvation by meal from the Relief Fund. Many of them have been supplied with seed potatoes, so that we have every hope, if there is a good harvest, that they will be independent again.

"Mrs. Richard Allen, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, will be glad to receive subscriptions, and send socks or stockings to any wishing to purchase. We have them in various sizes and colours, some very good gentlemen's socks, and ladies' and children's stockings, but it is very difficult to dispose of common socks.

"We have capital socks for working men, 1s. 4d. per pair, and boy's socks, and girls' stockings, suitable for children in Homes or Refuges.

"If some of our friends would kindly purchase these to give away, it would be helping two charities."

The above is communicated by Mrs. Marriage Allen, formerly well known as Miss Marriage, a devoted worker and superintendent of Ragged Schools and Missions in Shoreditch—still carrying on mission work in Charles Square, Hoxton.

THE CHILDREN'S DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

At this season of the year it has been our practice to gather the children of those schools needing special help, and take them for a day's pleasant outing into the country. We intend doing so this year. Lord Shaftesbury, whose heart always yearns towards poor children, and pities them on account of their many privations, has for many years addressed a letter to our subscribers and the public on their behalf, and his appeal has not been in vain.

This year he writes as follows:—

"24, Grosvenor Square, June, 1880.

"Dear Sir,—You will, I am sure, pardon me for again troubling you with a request to aid us in giving our Annual Excursion to the children of our Ragged Schools.

"It is a real benefit to them, both in mind and body, and the hope of it renders discipline far more agreeable to the children, and far more easy to the teachers.

"I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

"Shaftesbury.

"To———

"P.S.—Contributions will be most thankfully received by Mr. J. Kirk, 1, Exeter Hall, London, W.C."

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Family Prayers for Cottage Homes. Price 4s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

This is an excellent little compendium for the family altar. The prayers are short, the language simple, and the type large; they are twenty-one in number, six of them being for Sundays. The prayers are full of reference to matters of daily experience, and are thoroughly evangelical in tone.

Through the Eye to the Heart: a Black-Board Manual. Price 3s. 6d. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

In these days of improved methods of teaching in our Day Schools, where the black-board is in constant use, and all the appliances of

pictures and maps are at hand for arresting the attention, and for aiding the teacher to convey the lesson to the understanding of his pupil, it is necessary, if the Sabbath School is to retain its hold over the young, that the scholars should be met by all the preparedness, intelligence, and aptitude by which the week-day teaching is characterised. The book now under review should be in the hands of every religious instructor of the young. No book that has come under our notice is so admirably adapted as this for assisting conscientious and earnest-minded persons with a most ready method of imparting information.

It is profusely illustrated, and the model lessons are full of "sweetness and light." They have all the charm of Abbott, that great writer for the young.

The teacher who adopts the plans here recommended will readily gain the attention of his class, and secure a hushed silence while he proceeds in lines of light to impress Divine truth on the hearts and understandings of his scholars.

We fully believe that this book, under Divine guidance, will so brighten the pathway of instruction as to make the Sabbath day the best of all the seven, and enable the teacher to gain such a hold of the elder scholars as will make it very difficult for them to slip away from religious control.

CENTENARY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The Day, the Book, and the Teacher. By the Rev. Paxton Hood. 3*s.* 6*d.*, *cheaper edition* 2*s.* 6*d.* (Sunday School Union.)

Those who know Mr. Hood's books, especially "Blind Amos and his Velvet Principles, and his Self-formation," twelve chapters for young thinkers, will need no urging from us to procure this work. "It shows that Bible teaching is alone adequate to satisfy our nature, and that it was never more demanded than at the present time."

Robert Raikes: a Musical Memoir. Price 4*s.* (Sunday School Union.)

This Service of Song is not a compilation, but an original production by the Rev. Paxton Hood, and those whose privilege it was to be present at its first performance at Finsbury Chapel will testify to the delight it gave to a crowded audience.

Services of Song, as a rule, are both instructive and entertaining, but for their success they require a very able reader, and a numerous and well-disciplined choir. The service should not occupy more than one hour and a half. To secure this limit there should be a rehearsal, and if the prose portions are found too long, the passages for reading should be carefully marked and studied.

Notices of Meetings.

EAST GREENWICH RAGGED SCHOOL.

Celebration of the Thirty-third Anniversary.

Recently an interesting gathering took place of the friends and scholars of the East Greenwich Ragged School. This school has been in existence for a period of thirty-three years, thirty-one of which Mr. J. Newton has filled the post of master. Among those present were J. MacGregor, Esq. (Rob Roy), Lieut.-Col. R. W. Brooke, S. Saw, Esq., and Mr. R. J. Curtis, organising secretary of the Ragged School Union, Mrs. C. G. Wood, Mrs. and Miss Cochrane, Miss Curry, and Miss Saw. The scholars, 200 in number, were arranged in order, and the proceedings commenced with the well-known hymn, "When all Thy mercies, O my God," etc.

Lieut.-Col. BROOKE read the 90th Psalm, and prayed very earnestly that the meeting might be greatly blessed to all present, after which he explained to the children the reason they had been called together during their holidays.

Mr. J. MACGREGOR addressed the friends and children, remarking "this was not only a happy but a sunny day." The speaker dwelt on the great interest he took in the education of the poor, and referred to his connection with the Ragged School Union, the Shoeblack Brigade, and the London School Board. He expressed also the great interest he took in the East Greenwich Ragged School, and his appreciation of the valuable services of the master, Mr. Newton. He referred to the late Judge Payne's saying, "That it was the great business of the Ragged School to put something here (pointing to his heart), and the hope of something yonder (pointing to heaven), the love of Christ here and the glory of Christ hereafter." He dwelt also with much pleasure on some very striking and demonstrative tokens of gratitude he (the speaker) had received, one instance being worthy of notice. While walking through a street in New York a cabman leaped from his box and threw his arms round his (the speaker's) neck, testifying thus, with much emotion, his gratitude for the kindness shown him when he was a boy, many years before, in the Red Shoeblack Brigade of London.

Another hymn, "Thank God for the Bible," was then sung by the children.

Mrs. C. G. WOOD, of Blackheath, secretary and treasurer to the ladies' committee, next presented a gilt-edged Bible to each child, containing an inscription on the front leaf commemorative of the occasion. The Committee of the Ragged School Union kindly gave £2 towards the Bibles.

Lieut.-Col. BROOKE stated that the committee thought this a fitting occasion to express their esteem for the long and faithful services of Mr. Newton. He then called on Mr. MacGregor, who, in the name of the ladies' and gentlemen's committees, presented Mr. Newton with a purse containing £20 in gold, remarking

that a further sum of money was reserved for the purchase of some permanent record of his services, which might serve as a heirloom in the family.

Mr. NEWTON addressed a few affectionate and fatherly words to the children on the occasion of his thirty-first anniversary as master of the school. He thanked the committee very heartily for their kindness and sympathy, which had been unremitting, dwelling on the very friendly relations that had always existed between himself and the ladies' and gentlemen's committees, and especially for the mark of esteem and confidence given him on this present occasion.

Mr. R. J. CURTIS presented prizes to four girls (who had formerly been scholars in the school), successful candidates for "servants' prizes," given by the Ragged School Union. Each prize consisted of a beautifully illuminated card and articles of wearing apparel, selected by themselves, to the value of 7s. 6d.

On leaving the room each child was presented with a beautiful Scripture card, the gift of Mr. Kirk, secretary to the Ragged School Union.

The children testified their affection and esteem for their master by bringing flowers, principally wild ones, to decorate the table.

The interest of the occasion was enhanced by the presence of some well grown men, formerly scholars, as far back as 1849.

HACKNEY AND LOWER HOMERTON MISSION.

The formal opening of the Priory and Lower Homerton Mission and Ragged Schools took place a few days ago. Mr. R. G. Morgan (editor of *The Christian*) being unavoidably absent, the chair was taken by Mr. W. C. Miles, of Clapton. The hon. superintendent stated that within a radius of about half a mile there is a population of about 28,000, the extreme "Church accommodation" (of all denominations) being about 3,500, and that in considerable portions of the district, such is the apathy that exists in regard to spiritual things, that not more than from one to two per cent. of the inhabitants attend any place of worship. The preliminary meetings which had been held had been attended by 2,682 adults and 2,619 children. The missionary, Mr. Hughes, gave some interesting facts regarding his visiting in the districts. The following gentlemen were present and expressed their sympathy with this movement, which they felt had been greatly wanted: Mr. George Holland, of George Yard; Mr. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union; Mr. Paynter, Mr. Bain, and others, and it was stated that communications had been received from the Revs. F. R. Blatch, M.A., vicar of Homerton; W. Dinwiddie, LL.B.; Archibald Geo. Brown, Mr. R. C. Morgan, Mr. Wm. Forbes, and Mrs. Grattan Guinness, invoking the blessing of God upon their efforts.

HOMERTON RAGGED SCHOOL AND GOSPEL MISSION.

One of the most important institutions of the Borough of Hackney, and one commendable for its successful vice-preventive work, celebrated its twelfth anniversary at the Town Hall, Mare Street, recently, under the presidency of the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury,

K.G. The building was crowded to excess, and the proceedings throughout were of an encouraging and interesting character. The noble president was supported on the platform by Alderman Sir Robert Carden, the Rev. T. R. Blatch (vicar of Homerton), the Rev. S. Hebditch (Clapton), Mr. G. Gowland, Mr. Rennie, Mr. Frank Bevan (Barclay, Bevan, and Co.), Mr. W. R. Williams, and Mr. G. Holland. The drum and fife band played during the evening. An interesting part of the meeting was the presentation of a cushion to the noble president by members of the Young Women's Class.

Mr. J. M. VINEY read extracts from the twelfth annual report, detailing the operations of the institution, such as the Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools, which together had an average attendance of 500; the Youths' Institute, embracing Sunday Meeting and Night School, Club, Drum and Fife Band; the Young Women's Classes; Mothers' Meetings, embracing a Sick Fund; the Girls' Sewing Classes; the Band of Hope; the Library and Bookstall; the Penny Bank; the Adult Mission Work at College Lane and its Religious Services; the work of the Bible Women; the Temperance Society; the Saturday Evening Entertainment; together with Tonic Sol-fa Singing Class and a Working Men's Club. The income for the year, chiefly from donations and subscriptions, was £437 6s. 10½d., and the expenditure £416 13s. 6½d., leaving a balance of £20 13s. 4d.

Mr. H. R. WILLIAMS said the report was one of those interesting documents which could not be read alone. There were many points in it which were worthy of Christian consideration. The Ragged School work was a Christian organisation, and its definite object was to raise children by Christian influence into better citizens by making them good Christians. Ragged Schools to a large degree exercised a parental care over the children. They were clothed, fed, and afterwards assisted in finding respectable employment. This care was no part of the London School Board, and in this respect there was a great difference between the two institutions. The Ragged School was also one of a genuine spiritual character.

Sir ROBERT CARDEN said he could speak for certainty, as a magistrate, of the beneficial effects of such schools.

The meeting having been addressed by the Rev. S. Hebditch and Frank Bevan, Esq.,

Mr. REEVES HEWARD, the Hon. Secretary, rose to make a presentation. The Earl of Shaftesbury, he said, had been president of the Ragged School Union for more than thirty years, and for eight years president of the Homerton Ragged School and Gospel Mission. A few weeks ago the members of the Young Women's Class subscribed towards a cushion to present to his lordship. It was made by one of themselves. He now begged to hand it to their noble president, with the accompanying letter:—"We, the undersigned members of the Young Women's Class of the Homerton Ragged School, beg your lordship's acceptance of the accompanying cushion, as an expression of our acknowledgment of the kind interest you have manifested, not

only in our school, but in Ragged Schools generally, and we trust your life may be long spared to continue your labour of love." Signed by the various members of the class.

Lord SHAFTESBURY said: The words which I address to you to-night must be very few. I must express thanks for the manner in which the vote of thanks has been given, and also thanks to the young women who I must call, and proudly call, my daughters. I have a very large family in London indeed, and many of them have grown up to man and woman's estate. Let me assure you, my daughters, that this cushion shall be in constant use in the room where I sit every day of my life. I promise you that this cushion shall not be taken out of my room till I go to my long home.

The Rev. F. R. BLATCH, vicar of Homerton, pronounced the benediction, and the interesting proceedings concluded.

HORNSEY ROAD RAGGED SCHOOL, MISSION, AND INFANT NURSERY.

The annual meeting was held recently at the Mission-room, Ingram Place, the Rev. Mark Wilks in the chair. Among those present were the Rev. F. A. C. Lillingstone, the Rev. Dr. Hiron, Mr. Haig Miller, Mr. Hassell, Mr. Jecks, etc.

The report was read by Mr. W. M. Blyth, the hon. secretary, which gave an interesting account of the foundation of the Mission in 1825, more than fifty years ago. It was commenced in what is now known as Brand Street, and numbered amongst its earlier friends the late Rev. John Hambleton, the Rev. Henry Venn, and Judge Payne. In 1872, after clearing off a debt of £100 which had accumulated, the buildings on the south of Hornsey Road were handed over to the School Board for London, "the committee reserving to themselves the use of them for religious and philanthropic purposes on Sundays and at all times during the week when not required by the School Board." On the 19th of August, 1873, an Infant Nursery was added, and has proved not only an immense convenience to the mothers, but of inestimable value to many a poor and weakly child.

The financial statement showed that the balance of £40 at the debit of the institution last year had been cleared off, and that the treasurer has now £9 in hand. This result has been achieved by a special effort on the part of the committee, kindly assisted by the Ragged School Union.

EXETER BUILDINGS SCHOOL AND INSTITUTE.

The annual meeting of this institution took place recently. The Rev. F. Cox presided, and the room was crowded to excess.

The report was read by Mr. W. A. Rhind, which stated that the good works carried on here were in a healthy and vigorous condition, and that the committee were cheered and encouraged by the marks of Divine favour.

After the distribution of prizes to a number of the Sunday scholars, Mr. John Brown, who had most successfully trained the drum and fife band, was presented with a bâton, in recognition of his faithful and gratuitous services. There was a very pretty industrial exhibition held on this occasion also.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. Denham Smith, Dr. Sinclair Paterson, Dr. Gage Brown, and Messrs. Holland and R. J. Curtis.

HATFIELD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

Recently Mr. W. M'Cullagh Torrens, M.P., presided at the annual public meeting in connection with these Schools and Missions, Goswell Road. Among those present were Mr. A. Hawkins (member of the London School Board), Mr. R. J. Curtis (of the Ragged School Union), Mr. J. Beadle, Mr. R. D. Hilton (Treasurer), Mr. J. C. Page (Hon. Secretary), Mr. E. Green (Superintendent), Mr. N. Ashford, Mr. J. Beaumont, Mr. S. Drayton, Mr. C. Gardner, Mr. E. Green, and Mr. J. C. Page.

A social tea, to which a goodly number sat down, preceded the public meeting.

The annual report, read by the Hon. Secretary, stated that the institutions originated in 1827, when the work was commenced as a Sunday School for children of the poor in Golden Lane. Various other agencies were speedily added, such as a Day School, Week Night School, Parents' Meetings, Sewing Classes, &c.; and now for more than half a century has this noble work of elevating the social and religious condition among the poor progressed. Not only was religious and missionary work prosecuted, but secular instruction was imparted, meals were given to the hungry and needy, and total abstinence from alcohol was promoted.

The TREASURER had much pleasure in informing the meeting that the funds were £45 to the good.

Mr. HAWKINS, in moving the adoption of the report and balance-sheet, said it would be difficult to estimate the good that had been done in that small building in the last half-century.

Mr. CURTIS seconded the motion, and referred to the difficulty of ragged school teaching. It was this and other unpretentious labour that made society as stable and sound as it was; but, at the same time, he feared there was not sufficient robust piety among Christians to make the most of their opportunities for the removal of moral pollution.

The CHAIRMAN said it was a hopeful sign of society in that portion of the great city that an old institution like that had lost nothing of its vigour by its age. Length of days but made it younger, and difficulties but made it stronger. The London School Board was his child. It had cost him a great deal of trouble. He was an old parent, even a grandparent, but of all his progeny none had cost him so much anxiety as the School Board. He knew that many who paid rates to it grumbled. He was willing to bear any censure, when he remembered that 250,000 more children were in receipt of secular instruction than ten years ago. He was convinced that the School Board did not dispense with the need of Ragged Schools or other Christian work, but had made these agencies infinitely more necessary. He looked with apprehension on the direct consequences of mere School Board teaching at high pressure, unless they who believed that there was something better worth learning about the hereafter kept abreast and ahead of the work of secular

education. He looked sometimes with terror upon what London was apparently coming to, if something were not done to keep the young population Christianised. Otherwise society was in imminent danger, and it was as if a ship formerly worked by sails had high-pressure engines put in her and were managed without rudder or compass.

CONFERENCE HALL NIGHT SCHOOL.

The breaking-up of this school took place on Wednesday, March 24th. Punctually at half-past eight Earl Cairns entered the hall, accompanied by Capt. Moreton. On the platform also were the Rev. — Pennefather, Rev. T. A. Nash, Rev. D. B. Hankin, and others. Proceedings commenced by singing and prayer.

Mr. BADENOCH read the report. The school had been open 67 nights, the total number on the books being 1,050; number of classes, 41; highest attendance, 529; three times the attendance has been over 500; 143 different trades were represented by the men; the amount voluntarily contributed in small offerings towards the expense of school materials was £22 8s. 9d., against £19 4s. 3d. last year; towards the Cottage Hospital, £2 6s. 2d., and £7 1s. 4d. towards the Robin dinner given at St. Jude's lecture-hall, which was the suggestion of one of the men; 85 men had availed themselves of the advantages of the Bank, depositing £87 6s. 3d.; 76 men have drawn 329 books out of the library; 35 men have signed the pledge; 4,505 cups of coffee, with bread and butter, had been partaken of. The weekly Prayer Meeting at the close of the school on Wednesday evening had almost doubled its attendance. There were men there, however, who on entering did not know their A B C, but now could read well in class and in God's Word, men who were unable to form a single letter or to do the simplest sum in arithmetic who now both wrote and figured fairly well. As to Scripture knowledge, the examination that day fortnight proved that much knowledge had been gained.

Mr. PENN conducted the examination In Reading (John xii. first six verses being the test), 174 entered, 74 the average of merit, attention to stops, pitch of voice, &c., being points; in Scripture (one of the principal subjects of examination, he was glad to say, he had learnt that there was no other book of anything like equal value to the Bible in bringing out and enlightening the powers of widely-differing natures) 172 entered, with an average of 58 —the answers to such questions as, What was the most important truth contained in our Lord's declaration to the Woman of Samaria? to Nicodemus? and What was the sum total of our Lord's teaching with reference to the Sabbath? were widely different, but many of the replies were very good, nicely written, and quite little sermons, which it gave him the greatest pleasure to read: writing, 172 entered, 57 average of marks.

Captain MORETON said that work was begun in a little room with some half-dozen young men by the two nephews of the founder of that hall. All these men had been taught by ladies—not a man had anything to do with the teaching, which, as they had just seen, had been productive of such good results.

Earl CAIRNS then distributed the prizes.

Capt. MORETON, addressing the noble chairman, said it had been the desire of the men, in gratitude for his coming amongst them, to present to him some articles made by one of themselves, and he was deputed to ask his acceptance of a marble pyramid carved by a young man named Tremlett.

Lord CAIRNS accepted the present most graciously, and spoke earnestly to the young men.

CAMDEN TOWN RAGGED SCHOOL.

A very interesting gathering of parents took place in March. An excellent tea was provided. The meeting was addressed by Mr. James Robinson and other gentlemen.

KENTISH TOWN RAGGED SCHOOL.

On March 2 a numerous company of old scholars (over 100), male and female, were gathered together. The room was tastefully decorated. A good tea was provided. After tea Henry Spalding, Esq., took the chair. He told the touching story of Billy Bray, of Cornwall, a poor man once a blasphemer, but afterwards a man of great piety, one of the Bunyan type. The meeting was subsequently addressed by Messrs. Gunn, Curtis, and James. The singing was sweet and spirited.

NEW TOTHILL STREET.

Through the kindness of Mr. P. Fuller, the treasurer, a large gathering of the old scholars of the above schools had a sumptuous tea provided for them, after which they were addressed by Dr. Fuller and by the Rev. J. Northcote (curate to Canon Farrar). There were many mothers present at the meeting, with their babies in their arms. During the evening a question of the treasurer's elicited that thirty of those present were not possessors of a Bible, but on being asked whether they would like one, the answer "Yes" was promptly given, and an equally decided "Yes" was given in answer to the question whether they would promise to read in their Bibles daily if one were given to each. Thirty names were at once registered, all of whom have received their Bible.

"ONE TUN" RAGGED SCHOOL.

Since our last issue the twenty-third annual meeting of the "One Tun" Ragged School has been held at Westminster Buildings. The Earl of Shaftesbury, and afterwards Major Cooper Gardiner, were in the chair. Amongst those present were Sir R. Carden, M.P., Rev. H. Sinclair Paterson, M.D., Mr. Esterbrook, of the Temperance League, Mr. R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, and Mr. Price, of the Sunday School Union.

The noble chairman then presented prizes in money and books and certificates of merit to twenty-five young people who had kept their respective situations above twelve months with good character, and prizes for the flowers reared by the children in their homes.

A very pleasing episode took place, viz., the presentation of a memento of the girls' industry to the noble chairman. A young girl named Margaret Forbes—who, if we mistake not, has by her good conduct and ability been before selected for the honourable office—approached his lordship, and read a letter to him signed by herself on behalf of all the

girls. The letter thanked his lordship for the interest he had always evinced in the "One Tun" Schools, and especially for the kindness he had displayed in assisting them to come to such nice premises. The letter went on—"We know it was your birthday a little while ago, and we are so glad to wish you many happy returns of the day. We hope you will favour us by accepting a little specimen of our needlework, as you have on a former occasion. We did not always like to keep on making shirts, although you were so kind as to be pleased with the last, and we have therefore made a baby's frock." This announcement was received with much laughter. The remainder of the letter suggested that perhaps his lordship's daughter might know some one deserving of such a little present.

Lord SHAFTESBURY, who appeared to be much amused at the peculiarity of the gift, accepted it with thanks, after which

Mr. J. PAYNE read an abstract of the annual report.

The noble chairman then addressed the meeting. In the first place, he was very pleased with the letter which had been read to him. He could recollect the neighbourhood more than fifty years ago, and at that time if any one had predicted such a scene and such a gathering as they had that night—a lot of tidy girls and boys with happy faces—they would have been told that their ideas were impossible and imaginary. They could now see what, with God's blessing, could be done by such women as Mrs. Barker Harrison.

The meeting was addressed by the gentlemen named above.

GEORGE YARD, WHITECHAPEL.

The twenty-sixth annual meeting of this school was held recently, under the presidency of the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, who was supported on the platform by Sir R. W. Carden, Major Malan, Hon. Captain Hobart, and Messrs. T. A. Denny, T. Woodley, J. Chamberlain, W. Miles, A. Mackenzie, R. J. Curtis, Jackson, R. L. Lankester.

SERMON LANE MISSION BAZAAR.

Recently a grand bazaar was opened at Myddelton Hall, in aid of the fund for liquidating the building debt on the Sermon Lane Mission Hall. Originally a small Ragged School, the effort developed on the establishment of the London School Board, and became a direct mission to adults and children alike. Sunday Services, Sunday School, Week Night Schools, a Penny Bank, Breakfasts for the poor, a Temperance Society, and other agencies flourish, conferring temporal and spiritual benefit on the neighbourhood. The hall was enlarged and improved some year or two ago. The bazaar, which was liberally contributed to by a number of ladies, was opened by Mrs. Surr, a member of the London School Board, one large stall being that of the Colebrooke Row Presbyterian Church. The proceeds of the bazaar and £30 contributed by the Ragged School Union entirely liquidated the debt.

BRUNSWICK STREET.

Recently a substantial tea was given by the committee to the working lads who attend the Night School. After tea W. Edwards, Esq., gave prizes, consisting of books,

shirts, socks, vests, &c., to those who had the most marks for regular and punctual attendance.

OUR ROOM.

Recently at Park Crescent, Clapham, a tea was given by Mrs. Stevenson to the members of the Mothers' Meeting. After the tea Mr. Bumsted presided. Mr. R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, addressed the mothers. Miss Plummer presided at the pianoforte, and did her best to make the occasion a happy one.

FOX COURT.

The Fox Court Ragged Schools have been actively, while unobtrusively, at work for the benefit of the poor for the past thirty-four years. In the month of March some 400 parents from these schools partook of a hearty meal in Gray's Inn Hall, and were well entertained with addresses, music, and singing. The entertainments comprised an exhibition of dissolving views by Mr. James Pitkin; musical entertainment by Mr. J. H. Curtis and friends; service of song by the members of Fox Court Singing Class; entertainment with dissolving views, given free of charge, by the Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Society, illustrating the blessings of the Sabbath; lecture by Mr. H. Williams; and concluded by a concert given by Mr. C. E. Fry, of South Square, Gray's Inn. The friends of this institution are about to establish a "convalescent fund," for the purpose of defraying the expenses of young people who, through confinement and hard factory work, stand sorely in need of rest and fresh air.

WENTWORTH STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

The annual meeting of this institution was held at Christ Church Schoolrooms, Spitalfields. There were present Earl Nelson, Rev. R. C. Billing, Messrs. Ford, Schofield, Ayshford, and R. J. Curtis. Earl Nelson presided. The meeting was opened with singing and prayer. The report was read by the secretary (Mr. A. E. Day), after which the treasurer (Mr. A. Ayshford) read the balance-sheet. He observed that this was the most unfortunate balance-sheet that he had had to read during the twenty-one years he had been connected with the schools, as the liabilities were greater than they had ever been before. Earl Nelson then rose and said that he thought the responsibility of educating the poor ought to fall on the Church of England, and that members of that Church ought to feel it a duty and a pleasure to assist in such work as is carried on in schools like these in Wentworth Street. Country parishioners always make a point of helping the clergymen, either by teaching in the Sunday Schools or assisting at penny readings, &c., and he was sure there must be many in the East End of London who ought to be able and willing to assist in the like manner. After the adoption of the report had been moved and seconded by Messrs. Ford and Schofield, Earl Nelson distributed the prizes. The rector (Rev. R. C. Billing) said that he had paid the expenses incurred in preparing the new lease of the schools, viz., £10 6s. 8d., and did not intend to charge it to the schools, so that the debt due to the treasurer was now liquidated, but the liabilities

still had to be met. He then moved a vote of thanks to the chairman. The vote was seconded by Mr. Ayshford, and carried unanimously. The boys belonging to the Drum and Fife Band played several pieces during the evening.

NICHOL STREET SCHOOLS.

During the winter, on Sunday evenings, some 1,100 children and young people attend, and on week evenings about 300 receive secular instruction. The staff of teachers is 90. The premises are being enlarged to give additional accommodation. Pecuniary aid is required. The Ragged School Union have promised £100 when the rest is collected.

GRAVESEND RAGGED SCHOOL.

Recently the annual meeting of the friends of this institution, and also the scholars' prize meeting, was held in the Assembly Rooms, presided over by the Mayor (F. B. Nettleingham, Esq.), and at which there was a good attendance. On the platform there were Mr. R. J. Curtis, organising secretary to the Ragged School Union; Mr. John Kirk, secretary to the Union; the Revs. G. L. Herman, R. Balgarnie, Noah Heath, F. Shaw, G. Hutton, and J. C. Harrop; Messrs. J. Elkin, W. Rayner, J. Gould, F. E. Crowhurst, G. W. Penman (hon. sec.), W. Box (treasurer), Purcell, Saunders, and other members of the committee. A selection of hymns was prettily rendered by the children. The meeting was addressed by the Mayor, the Revs. G. L. Herman, Harrop, Noah Heath, and Messrs. Box, Clark, Curtis, Elkin, Kirk, and Rayner. The collection and sums promised amounted to £52 14s. 7d.

THE CONTRAST.

The haughty spirit precedes a fall.—Proverbs xvi. 18.
Grace given to the lowly.—Proverbs iii. 34.

"I tell you again, as I told you before,
I have nothing to give you, so ask for no more;
Have gentlemen's sons nothing better to do
With their money, than give it to poor folks like you?"

'Oh, be not so cross, sir, I would not offend!
I thought by your looks that you would be a friend;
For my father is sick, and my mother is dead;
I wish I were able to work for my bread."

"And is that your wish then, my good little man?"
Said a voice from behind, "will you work if you can?"
"Oh yes," was the answer, "I would with great joy,"
"Then come to my Garden, I'll give you employ."

"But you, my young gentleman, what have you done?
I am sorry I've reason to blush for my son;
Fine clothes and fine treatment are badly bestowed,
For I see they have made you ill-natured and proud.

"This poor little boy, though so shabbily dress'd,
Has more of true greatness than you in his breast;
For, believe me, that pride sinks you far beneath those
Who work for their parents, their food, and their clothes."